



CHILD CARE
LICENSING BUREAU

Michigan Child Care Matters



Issue 2023-6

Rule of the Month **P.2**

Crisis Management **P.4**

Licensee Partnership
Interview **P.5**

Question of the Month **P.8**

TECH CORNER

Your phone or smart device can help you during an emergency or crisis. There are three simple things you can do to help you prepare.

1. Be sure that your smartphone is receiving alerts from the [Emergency Alert System \(EAS\)](#). When you receive an alert, read it immediately and take the appropriate actions to prepare yourself and the children in your care. If you are not receiving EAS alerts, you may need to check the settings on your mobile device. If you are unsure how to do this, check your user manual or contact your mobile carrier. Older models of phones may not have this capability.
2. Prior to an emergency or crisis, create email, text, and/or messenger groups that include all of the parents of the children in your care. This allows you to quickly and efficiently notify all parents when there is an emergency or crisis. There are several tutorials online on how to set up a group in your email, phone contacts, and in messenger. Make it a habit to update your groups whenever a child enrolls or disenrolls from your program.
3. Keep pictures of your emergency and crisis management plans on your phone or smart device. If you need to evacuate or relocate, you will always have a copy with you. It is easy to forget what is included in your plans when you're in the middle of an emergency situation.



CENTER RULES

R 400.8161(1)(e)

Emergency procedures.

(1) Written procedures for the care of children and staff for each of the following emergencies must be developed and implemented:

(e) Crisis management including, but not limited to, intruders, active shooters, bomb threats, and other man-made events.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The relocation site must be determined in advance and be included in the plan. The relocation site must be clean and safe.

Children with special needs may have difficulty in an emergency situation. Each emergency plan must address how each child with a special need will be accommodated in each type of emergency. The plan must be based on each child with special needs enrolled in care. If possible, the plan can broadly address a special need area, such as children with mobility issues. A center may need to use specialized equipment when evacuating or moving infants and toddlers to another space.

Check manufacturer specifications for weight limits when using equipment for multiple children. Refer to fire safety rules for using cribs to evacuate. A plan for shelter in place and lock down procedures in which parents will not have access to enter the building must be created; parents should be notified of the plan in advance to avoid panic.

R 400.8161(2)

Emergency procedures.

(2) The written procedures must include all of the following:

- (a) A plan for evacuation.
- (b) A plan for safely moving children to a relocation site.
- (c) A plan for shelter-in-place.
- (d) A plan for lockdown.
- (e) A plan for contacting parents and reuniting families.
- (f) A plan for how each child with special needs will be accommodated during each type of emergency.
- (g) A plan for how infants and toddlers will be accommodated during each type of emergency.
- (h) A plan for how children with chronic medical conditions will be accommodated during each type of emergency.

R 400.8161(4)

Emergency procedures.

(4) The crisis management plan required by subrule (2) of this rule must be maintained in a place known and easily accessible to all personnel.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The center must assure that the crisis management plan has been shared with all personnel.

The location of the written crisis management plan must be known to all personnel.

A suggestion is to post the plan on the inside of a cupboard door in each of the classrooms.

R 400.8161(8)**Emergency procedures.**

(8) Each child care staff member shall be trained at least twice a year on his or her duties and responsibilities for all emergency procedures referenced in subrule (1) of this rule.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Training on emergency procedures counts toward the annual clock hours of professional development as required by R 400.8131(6). Verification of training must be kept as required by R 400.8131(11). Review of the center's emergency procedures must be part of the center's ongoing professional development plan as required by R 400.8131(8).

R 400.8161(9)**Emergency procedures.**

(9) If cribs are used in emergency evacuations, then all doors within the means of egress must be wide enough to readily accommodate the crib evacuation.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Compliance may be determined by measurement of cribs and doors or by demonstration of a crib evacuation. Standard cribs have a weight limit and may not support the weight of multiple infants and/or toddlers at one time. Read the manufacturer specifications.

CHILD CARE LICENSING BUREAU AND LICENSEE PARTNERSHIPS

Licensing consultants and licensees partner together to ensure programs and facilities meet state requirements and provide children in care a safe environment and enriching programming. There are times when the licensing consultant and licensee need to work closely together on a tough issue to create a positive outcome. MCCM will highlight one of these partnerships in each issue by sharing an interview between licensing and a licensee.

Below is an interview between licensing consultant Jennifer DeMuynck from the Flint/Macomb Region and licensee designee Jamie Middaugh. This interview highlights the assistance Jennifer provided to Jamie to help her switch the age ranges in her two buildings.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

Jaime - When did you open your child care license?

Jamie Middaugh

Mine opened, let's see, I took over ownership in November of 2020.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

That was an interesting time.

Jamie Middaugh

Yes.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

How were things at that time with COVID?

Jamie Middaugh

At the time, we were building back up from COVID, and we have two buildings.

We have one building that's always been set up for the nursery, babies through 2 1/2 and then the other building is from 2 1/2 through school age. One building is bigger than the other building, and it was set up where the smaller building was for the older kids and the bigger building was for the younger kids.

When I took over, and Jennifer and I started talking, we thought it was a good idea to make a change. She suggested moving the older kids to the bigger building and the younger kids to the smaller building.

I think I thought it was going to be harder than it was with getting approvals and things like that, but it really wasn't. Jennifer was great in answering my questions, what I needed to do, and what that would look like. So, we went with it, and I think my staff started realizing that I was going to make big changes. They were kind of prepared, and for them, it was, OK, we're doing this next, OK, we're doing that next.

We weren't afraid to make changes and get into projects.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

How long did the whole process take?

Jamie Middaugh

When we started talking about that at the end of last year we had all of our approvals.

Jennifer DeMuynck (LARA)

We started talking about that in the summer. I was out for an interim inspection.

Jamie Middaugh

Yes, that's when we talked about it. So that took about 5-6 months to make the changes of the buildings.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA) When you say approvals, what type of approvals?

Jamie Middaugh

Approvals for the children to be licensed for the opposite building.

Jennifer DeMuynck (LARA)

You did some work too. Physical work to the building, so a fire inspection. She was also putting in a brand new, beautiful kitchen in one of the buildings. So that required environmental health.

Jamie Middaugh

The fire inspection for the nursery building because we built a new foyer area so those parents would have two doors to go through, two locked doors so that we could let them in.

The older kids to the bigger building made more sense. We have bathrooms in those classrooms, so they don't have to leave the room. We don't need a teacher to help when the staff need to leave the classroom to take children to the bathroom.

In the smaller building, the way the windows are, they're longer, so they go closer to the floor area so the toddlers can actually go up and look out the window now. They have more natural light, and that's great for them because they're more encouraged to go to the window to try to stand up, and they can see a lot more around them. And the classrooms are bigger, so it just made sense to have more children in those rooms instead of having to stop at 12. We can now have more children interacting together.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

Have you seen a difference in the programming and the staff and children?

Jamie Middaugh

You know, I wasn't sure, so I have 12 staff members who stayed with me through this whole change, and so I brought them in and asked them what positive changes they noticed over the past 2 1/2 years. And wow, I didn't realize how much they really noticed and appreciate. It is a lot of the things that Jennifer and I have talked about that she had suggested to me.

I think one of the very first things was taking ownership, as this was my first time as a director, a new director. This included advice on how to place my staff and have the support that I need for the staff and how to place everyone, so that their responsibilities are spread out adequately.

I remember that Jennifer and I had a phone conversation about that, and one of the things you said is make sure that both buildings have a director.

Both buildings have an administrator, and even just for the kitchen, we make sure that the kitchen staff is doing their jobs in the kitchen. So that it's not too much on the staff, they aren't doing office type things.

You know that it's not too much on the teachers that the teachers aren't doing office type things and food prep.

Everybody has a role, and just to make sure, I assign the roles to two people who are designated to the positions.

All of that is what we worked on. I think that was just from one of Jennifer and my first conversations. She told me to reach out to other people, reach out to people in my position because you can't always go to the director, and it's kind of lonely being an owner because you can't really go to the directors and be stressed. I don't want to bring that to them. They have each other to talk to and bounce ideas off each other.

I kind of had to find my own support with my role, and I had to reach out for it and I think that just pushed me to reach out to other owners. I have friends in the field that are in management positions.

I have my sister-in-law who is in a management position, and she's very firm and knows how things should be. I have been able to bounce ideas off her.

I learned a lot from her with setting up procedures and policies and what everything should look like. My staff know exactly what to expect and when things are due because they trained for it.

For the most part, I am noticing, from when I first started, a much smoother transition from infancy to school age, not only with the kids but with the staff. – Jamie Middaugh, Licensee Designee

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

It's really helpful when you have support, and you can reach out to others that are either doing something similar to you or the same.

Jamie Middaugh

It really is, and I think you know that first conversation was just surreal.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

Have the parents had feedback?

Jamie Middaugh

Yeah, definitely. I've had parents tell me that they've noticed the changes that we're making and one of the parents said everything that you are doing and how you're moving forward speaks volumes. It's nice to hear.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

Jennifer, when you were at the interim inspection, what were you seeing that led you to this conversation?

Jennifer DeMuyndck (LARA)

Jamie had already listened to the consultation that I gave her about the fact that as the owner, she had a different role than the program director she used to be under with the previous owner, and to be successful, both buildings should have a program director to operate day-to-day operations, and she would oversee the whole thing. This would balance it out and not spread herself so thin.

She really listened and took that to heart because that was just consultation, and she arranged that.

What was already working for her was having somebody there to prepare lunches instead of the staff members doing that in the classrooms.

Opening up these new centers, it was looking at the younger ages where they had these huge rooms. It really wasn't cost effective.

With the bigger building, the communication system wasn't working. Now that the buildings have switched, financially, Jaime needs fewer staff now in the bigger building because it's for the older children.

She's operating 2 GSRP classes. She could possibly get in another GSRP class, and the smaller building, I've noticed, a flow because of the way it now operates.

Parents can just walk into the foyer area and hand their children over. They're not walking back into classrooms and sort of wandering aimlessly to get to the infant room because the infant room is right there.

It's just a really nice flow.

The staff can speak to each other, so if there's a problem, there's a lot more interaction with the infant and toddler aides and they're helping each other out greatly.

For the most part, I am noticing, from when I first started, a much smoother transition from infancy to school age, not only with the kids but with the staff.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

It definitely sounds like it's a really great working relationship because, Jamie, you trusted in what Jennifer was saying, who has a lot of experience with a lot of different facilities.

Jamie Middaugh

I love that because I love hearing experiences of others.

Jennifer DeMuynck (LARA)

And that says a lot about being proactive. It says a lot about Jamie and the fact that she actually did listen to some of the things that I was saying when I was walking through.

Jamie Middaugh

Jennifer would say it's a good idea if you'll do this and that, and these are the things you have to change, and I just took to it. I did as much as I could out of everything, and the staff have noticed a lot of positive changes that have come from it. One of my substitutes who's only there part time even said I can see that it's more uniform between both buildings. I know what you expect in the nursery building is the same as the preschool building.

Whenever there's a change, everybody knows about it so we're all on the same page.

Jackie Sharkey (LARA)

Jennifer has a lot of experience, and it's great that you work so well together.

Jennifer DeMuynck (LARA)

I trust Jamie.

Jamie Middaugh

Oh, I trust you!

That wasn't happening in the other building because they were so separated and this one, they're not.

It's moving smoother, and both program directors that she has in their roles know the rules. They know what's expected of them.

Jennifer DeMuynck (LARA)

Jaime really puts forward the effort. I know that if Jaime is telling me I'm going to get there, it's going to happen. It makes me feel good that children are in that type of a care environment.

Jamie Middaugh

I appreciate all of our conversations and everything that you have to offer me as far as the consultations. I just love those little extras that you give, insight on things that I've noticed in the past, or how we can make things better, what we can do to grow. I appreciate that.

I tell my staff that you are a person, and they can ask you questions they are not sure about.

So, they feel comfortable that she's not there to find things wrong. She's there to help and offer support and knowledge.

You have to be able to trust, and I think that's one of the big things is that Jennifer trusts me, and I trust Jennifer and I trust my staff and I think that's important because you have to, if you put somebody in a position, you have to have some trust and faith that they're going to do their very best to try to do the right thing.

I embrace any opportunity I can to learn from another person's experiences. When I meet someone with passion, experience and knowledge, it feeds my passion even more and pushes me harder. One thing Jennifer did for me that was huge was encourage me to step out of my comfort zone.

I had a good rapport with our families, and even though it was still COVID, I had a good rapport with the remaining staff we had at that time (after taking over ownership). Many of them stayed with me. I currently have 12 ladies that have stuck by me over the past 2 1/2 years who transitioned through the change of ownership.

All of this was about the time that Jennifer became our consultant. I knew I had my work cut out for me - more than being liked by my consultant, I needed to find a connection and trust. That's when one of our first mentoring conversations came into play - she consulted me on how to build a strong management team, what roles should look like and how to firmly set policies and procedures. She gave me the advice to talk to other owners and find others in my similar position to talk to. I'm a pretty reserved person, so Jennifer, this was the first push for me out of my comfort zone.

I am beyond honored for being able to share this with you both.

Thank you so much!

Get to Know Us

Get to know the staff with a question each month. What school item did you want most as a child before the start of the school year?



Codie Mayhew – Northwest Region

- I always like getting a new backpack and art supplies.



Catherine Edgar – Flint/Macomb Region

- Clothes!!!!



Stacy Tomzak – Gaylord Region

- The biggest box of Crayola crayons!! (that I never got) lol



Jeannie Ellis – Gaylord Region

- I always loved a new 64 crayon box of Crayola crayons with the built-in sharpener. I don't know why but that always made me feel extra special.



Dalerie Hughes – Lansing Region

- My favorite back to school item was the Trapper Keeper binder.



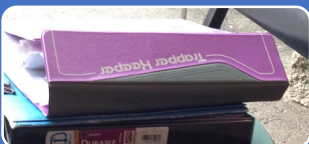
Latanya Ellington – Wayne Region

- I was always concerned with what I would be wearing the first day of school. I had to have a new outfit and shoes before starting school to feel completely ready! 😊



Anne O'Neill - Gaylord Region

- I always wanted a new big box of crayons with the sharpener on the back!



Rebecca Wagster – Southwest Region

- The back-to-school item that I coveted most was the Trapper Keeper. I started off each year with big dreams of organization but by spring my locker was a disarray of loose paper.



Chimere Simmons – Pontiac Region

- Back to school was always an exciting time for me; I was most excited about going clothes shopping! I could not wait for the beginning of the school year when I got to show off my new clothes.